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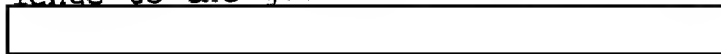
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SURINAM: Opposition groups may try to force a test of the government by capitalizing on labor problems and racial friction.

Racial antagonisms between Creoles (Negroes) and East Indians have been fanned by a strike of secondary school teachers. Black power elements and other radicals reportedly have been involved in the strike, which began on 15 October and has shut down several schools. Among the objections raised by the teachers is the replacement of a Creole supervisor by an East Indian. According to the US consul, there is a growing tendency among the Creoles to regard the issue as basically racial.

Although a Creole himself, Minister-President Sedney leads a coalition that is dominated by the East Indian People's Welfare Party. Sedney has been having difficulty in controlling his own Progressive National Party (PNP). Earlier this month the labor minister, a PNP member, resigned, in part because of apparent dissatisfaction with East Indian dominance.

There has been considerable public criticism of Sedney since he assumed office last November, and the current problems may weaken his position further. Opposition groups believe a major challenge to the government could be developing.



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INDIA: Prime Minister Gandhi has suffered a political defeat in Uttar Pradesh, one of India's most important states.

On 1 October, Mrs. Gandhi had president's rule--direct control from New Delhi--imposed upon Uttar Pradesh as a step toward eventual installation of a coalition government led by her Ruling Congress Party in the state. A five-party opposition coalition, however, put together a majority of the state's legislators before Mrs. Gandhi's party could move. As a result, the Ruling Congress was forced to bow out and the five-party coalition took control on 18 October. The new coalition is headed by a member of the Organization Congress, Mrs. Gandhi's archrival since the Congress Party split last year.

Some of the prime minister's earlier maneuverings to install the Ruling Congress in power in Uttar Pradesh were of questionable legality. In particular, the imposition of "president's rule" seemed arbitrary and had aroused widespread disapproval. She was apparently emboldened to act as she did, however, by overly optimistic reports from the Ruling Congress' local leadership regarding her party's statewide strength. When the national parliament reconvenes next month, Mrs. Gandhi will probably have to face a no-confidence motion, but her present capitulation in Uttar Pradesh will take some of the sting out of the opposition attack.

Uttar Pradesh, India's most populous state, is a key to the prime minister's planning for the national elections that must take place by February 1972. Before then, therefore, she may make another attempt to install a Ruling Congress government in the state. For now, however, she is likely to concentrate on recovering some of her lost prestige and on reorganizing the leadership of the Ruling Congress in Uttar Pradesh.

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PHILIPPINES: The assassination of one of President Marcos' political henchmen could complicate Marcos' control over his power base in northern Luzon.

Congressman Floro Crisologo was gunned down on 18 October at a crowded church service in Ilocos Sur Province, his political fiefdom. Crisologo, a member of the Ilocano ethnic group, like Marcos had been a principal guarantor of the Marcos home base in the Ilocano region. His heavy-handed rule was one of the Philippines' most notorious examples of the abuse of power by prominent families.

Ilocos Sur has had a turbulent political history even by Philippine standards and the assassination could set off a new and bitter power struggle there. Marcos has appealed against reprisals and has reinforced the provincial constabulary. In the past, however, the constabulary has been ineffective in coping with violence in the province.

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TUNISIA: President Habib Bourguiba has established a new timetable for pending constitutional revisions and a party congress.

In a televised speech on 15 October, Bourguiba indicated that--contrary to the timetable announced in June--the proposed constitutional changes would be submitted to the National Assembly without first securing the approval of the often-postponed congress of the ruling Destourian Socialist Party.

Bourguiba's interest in proceeding with the constitutional changes springs from his concern over presidential succession. In his speech, he emphasized his fear that anarchy will prevail when he leaves the scene. In addition to urging party militants to adopt and adhere to precise constitutional provisions on succession, he called for a revamping of the party's structure before its congress is held.

The party congress, originally slated for last fall, is now scheduled for October 1971. Some thought had been given to holding the congress last month. Bourguiba, however, had earlier indicated his sharp disapproval of the fact that sympathizers of Ahmed Ben Salah, the discredited former economic chief who was sentenced last spring to 20 years imprisonment, had not been purged from the party. Another effort to eliminate Ben Salah's partisans can now be expected.

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CHILE: Jorge Alessandri has withdrawn his name from consideration in the congressional runoff on 24 October, thus making Allende's confirmation as president-elect a certainty. In a statement released yesterday ex-president Alessandri asked his backers in congress not to vote for him and stated that this would enable Allende to take office in "a climate of maximum tranquility that will strengthen confidence and permit revitalization of economic activity."

* * * *

USSR-SOMALIA: Soviet Politburo member Polyansky left Moscow yesterday to attend ceremonies in Mogadiscio marking the first anniversary of the "Somali Revolution." He will be the highest-ranking member of the Soviet hierarchy to visit Somalia, which the USSR has provided with considerable military and economic aid in recent years. The visit underlines Moscow's satisfaction with the policies of the Somali regime and also is indicative of the Soviets' mounting interest in the strategically located East African country. Polyansky is likely to use the occasion to press for closer cooperation in all spheres.

* * * *

TURKEY: Prime Minister Demirel has appealed for calm in the face of a cholera epidemic that broke out in Istanbul last week. The death toll has been set officially at 30 but other estimates run much higher. Despite government assurances that the epidemic is being brought under control, the worst may be yet to come as many inhabitants from the hardest hit slums are fleeing the city and may spread the disease. Furthermore, stocks of vaccine--including those for the American community--are being rapidly depleted.

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